

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN LCMS
11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD, CRETE, NE 68333



Come to the cross and learn of God's great love for all His people. There is friendship, fellowship, and the gift of God's word of forgiveness.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 8 AUGUST 2020

Dar Friends,

I am a very consistently inconsistent person. On a whim, for a meeting some years ago, I took a cross and put it in the middle of the table to remind those gathered what should be at the center of our work. I vaguely recall that there was some need then to do so. I suggested, and certainly thought then, that I would do that at every such meeting. Well, as you might guess where I'm going with this, I didn't keep that up. Many other things like that I have done ... and then not done. And that is true in following God's commands (Romans 7).

But God is consistently consistent. Even if we do not always see evidence of it with our eyes, God is solid as a rock. Hebrews 13:8 (ESV): "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Psalm 18:2 (ESV): "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

God is constant in applying the Law through His Word. There are matters of right and wrong. Truth is not subject or relative to our whims and wishes. His commands are sure and foundational for a good community based on law and order. God is holy and just and He does not waver on winds of whatever is trendy.

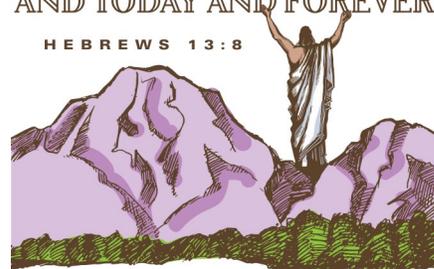
But God is also gracious and full of mercy. In His righteousness God must punish waywardness in regard to His laws. He is holy and must serve out justice. He has and He does. For all sin, He did this in Jesus. Jesus' life, suffering, death, and resurrection is God's action of love on our behalf. This is our sure salvation where forgiveness was won for us. And for our wayward ways, for our sloppiness in our behavior, for all our sin and thoughtlessness and carelessness, we have one who took up all this upon Himself and died for it. His mercy is new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). And we are raised up in God's steadfast love in the resurrection and hope of eternal life in Christ.

We can count on God to always be present to hear our prayers. He constantly assures us in His Word that our sins are forgiven and that He is present with us. He doesn't waver. He is our solid rock and the same just, loving, gracious God always—constant and sure. This is very comforting for someone who is inconsistent and wayward. God is sure. In the constancy of God and His Word we find our solid foundation every day. To God be the glory.

In Christ, Pastor Toensing

JESUS CHRIST
IS THE SAME YESTERDAY
AND TODAY AND FOREVER.

HEBREWS 13:8



PLEASE HAVE ALL INFORMATION OR ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO CHRIS HOLLMAN BY 25TH, THANK YOU!

Clothing for Orphan Grain Train: We can send **gently** used clothing to Orphan Grain Train. People's City Mission will take anything (except books). When leaving clothes in the drop box outside the church by the back door, please mark them for either OGT or PCM (People's City Mission).



ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN is rolling into Lincoln this September at our new location **4817 N. 56th Street Suite #10, Lincoln.** We are looking for support in many ways including volunteers, leaders, and donations. During the month of August, we will begin training volunteers and setting up this facility with a grand opening in September. If you would like to get involved please contact Grant Schmidt at gschmidt@ogt.org or Bruce Sutherland at bruce@ogt.org or call OGT toll free 877-371-7393

FROM THE ELDERS...

Have you ever driven down a road? Just to drive with no destination in mind. The road seems to go on and on with no stopping point. Life is like that long road going on and on not knowing when it's going to end.

But you still strive for another tomorrow hoping that in the long run everything will turn out all right. Just like the road though, it must come to an end.

Yours in Christ, The Elders



BIRTHDAYS

2 Jason Jordan
 5 Sara Moravek
 10 Abbey Reetz, Kade & Stella Eggert
 12 Amanda Rezac
 13 Ray Bleich, Michael Reiss, Kristi Reitz
 14 Todd Hoyer
 15 Hannah Rethmeier
 17 Eric Ellingson, Mara Hoyer, Madison Persing
 18 Sheila Church, Marianne Tesar

19 Shirley Reetz, Darren Weber
 20 Diane Gropp
 21 Jim Ellingson
 22 Terry Meinke, Kristine Muff
 25 Garrett Mehl
 26 Mike Langfeldt
 28 Brad Kalkwarf, Miriam Weber
 31 Donald Rejcha

BAPTISMS

1 Hope Creamer
 2 Leahh Anderson, LaVonne Nitzel

3 Erica Sublett, Briggen Reetz
 8 Ashley Walker
 10 Wayne Hansmeyer
 11 Christopher Ladman, Tyler Stehlik, Easton Brethouwer
 13 Alexandra Weber
 19 Kyle Ochs, Axel Heusinkvelt
 20 Elyana Lee
 21 Gloria McDermott
 22 Sara Moravek
 23 Brad Pomajzl, Kristi Reitz
 27 Kira Wohl, Anton Slama
 29 Madison Persing

OUR MISSION Share the Joy of His News by growing inward through God's Word, Sacraments and fellowship and by growing outward through words, actions, and mission outreach.

From Gov. Ricketts' Press release dated July 20, 2020...

Ban Dismemberment Abortions: Nebraska is a pro-life state, and it's important that our laws reflect our values. Senator Suzanne Geist has introduced LB 814, a bill that further strengthens Nebraska's pro-life policies. LB 814 would put an end to the brutal practice of dismemberment abortion in Nebraska. This type of abortion usually takes place between 13 and 24 weeks of pregnancy. The barbaric procedure literally rips apart a preborn child, piece-by-piece, to destroy the life of the baby. This summer, Senators can put a stop to this ruthless way of performing an abortion by passing this important bill.

Please encourage your state representative to vote for this bill. Encourage and pray for our Governor and all who support the sanctity of human life from conception to life's end.

Dear Members of St. John Lutheran Church:

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the people who have been affected by COVID-19 in this unprecedented global event and we appreciate the healthcare workers, local communities, and governments around the world who are on the front lines in battle with this pandemic. We continue to pray for healing for those infected, for our doctors and nurses, for researchers, and for our government officials to make decisions beneficial to our state and country.

Our church Council is focused on the health and safety of each of our members as we slowly move to engage with one another again, albeit cautiously with our Lord's help. Please know that we are monitoring the coronavirus situation continuously and we are confident we have taken the necessary precautions to ensure the continued functionality of our mission work.

With that, the Church Council has decided that there will not be a quarterly Voters' meeting at this time. And yet, we know there may be viewpoints that need to be heard, ideas that have yet to be tried, along with opinions that are as important to hear as any other. President Gary Meinke, Pastor Toensing or other Board members request your feedback. Until we do have a Voters' assembly, please know that the church Council will do its best in considering the status of state health mandates, discussing our options for carrying out our work together, and, when necessary, making decisions for the work at hand for the good and safe efforts to carry out our work as a congregation.

With the actions taken thus far, let us be confident in God who provides for us, gives us the faith to look beyond today while helping us to remain committed in supporting each other, our church and our neighbors as we work through these trying times. We will do what we can to be transparent and open in our work on the congregation's behalf during this time of pandemic.

Celebrating our salvation in Christ Jesus, growing in love and in His teaching, and then sharing that good news is central to all we do as a congregation. God grant that we are able to continue to assemble for praise and worship and then to do the work He has called us to do.

In the name of Jesus, St. John Church Council

For boards, committees, groups looking to do their mission work in person at St. John...

God's grace be with you all as you receive what God has given you in Christ, and God be with you as you look to do the work to which you have been called and the service that we are honored to provide in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior.

As you are aware, we are dedicated to minimizing the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 coronavirus while at the same time, ensuring our worship services continue. We are utilizing physical distancing and the highly recommended measure of wearing facial masks as a worldwide guideline for worship. We also ask that you do so as some in-person meetings of our boards and committees and groups look to meet at church. The health measures will be loosened or strengthened as updates or enhanced guidelines change in the months to come.

For those entities that decide to meet at church for in-person meetings or study or work, we have asked that you follow certain protocols for the safety and comfort of all involved. We ask that a time distance of 72 hours separate the use of meeting space. Please schedule your meeting with Chris, the church office manager. For the comfort of all members of the group, we ask that if one person in the group wishes to wear a mask, then all will wear a mask. If guests are welcome for your meeting, please state so in the weekend bulletin before your meeting. We would like the congregation to see that the work of the church is being done by our boards, etc. Supplies will be available to wipe down or disinfect the used area when you are finished.

We thank you for the portion of work you do for the mission of God's Church. Gary Meinke and Pastor Toensing are willing to assist you in your work—contact them if you need any assistance. God bless you and we pray for an end for the need of these exceptional measures.

August Elders' Schedule

August 2 with Holy Communion—8:30 am James Walker 10:00 am Terry Dittmer 6:00 pm Todd Hoyer **August 3** with Holy Communion-10:00 am Roger Koch

August 9-8:30 am James Walker 10:00 am Delyn Meinke 6:00 pm Todd Hoyer, Mitch Homolka
August 10 10:00 am Roger Koch

August 16 with Holy Communion-8:30 am James Walker 10:00 am Terry Dittmer 6:00 pm Todd Hoyer, Mitch Homolka **August 17** with Holy Communion 10:00 am Roger Koch

August 23-8:30 am Delyn Meinke 10:00 am Terry Dittmer 6:00 pm Todd Hoyer, Mitch Homolka
August 24 10:00 am Roger Koch

August 30 with Holy Communion-8:30 am James Walker 10:00 am Delyn Meinke 6:00 pm Todd Hoyer, Mitch Homolka **August 31** with Holy Communion 10:00 am Roger Koch

THANK YOU to Kaylie Brethouwer and the Board of Education for making the 2020 Vacation Bible School available in stay at home packets. A special THANK YOU goes to Pastor Toensing for all his work to make the daily lesson videos. This is certainly a different year but definitely a special VBS!



2021 CONVENTION CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Nominations Committee for the 2021 Nebraska District Convention is seeking nominations of candidates for the following offices, boards, and committees: Secretary of the District, Constitution Committee, Nominations Committee, Board of Regents (Seward), and Synod Committee for Convention Nominations. The Committee invites nominations from the circuit visitors, ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, lay members, circuit forums, and congregations of the District.

By means of this announcement, the invitation to submit names is herewith extended to all in the Nebraska District LCMS who are interested. Please use the online form, "Recommendation for Nomination," which you can find at our District Convention website. The Committee requests that names be forwarded to the District Office between July 15 and October 11, 2020. Experience has shown that the Committee needs a major time segment to do its work properly.

Patient attention, valuable discoveries

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience — or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his annus mirabilis ("year of wonders") and reportedly said, "If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent."

What have you discovered during the Covid-19 crisis? What appreciations have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God's presence? What empathy do you now feel for writers of words such as "I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope" (Psalm 130:5, NIV)?